

THE EAST BAY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.

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THE BLOWN FUSE

CLUB STATION W6CUS

VOLUME LXX NUMBER 4

APRIL 2022

EBARC Meetings

April 8, 2022, 7:30 p.m.
"Tower Takedown,"

Sharon Primbsch, AA6XZ
Check your email for Zoom link



The Executive Board meets monthly before each general meeting. For the date, time, & location, contact officers at EBHam.office@gmail.com.

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THE EAST BAY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.
Post Office Box 1393
El Cerrito, CA 94530

The Blown Fuse is published monthly by the East Bay Amateur Radio Club, Inc. and is free to its members. *The Blown Fuse* welcomes articles of interest to its members and amateur radio in general. *The Blown Fuse* reserves the right to edit or reject any material submitted. Material submitted becomes the property of *The Blown Fuse*. Permission is hereby granted to reproduce material printed herein provided proper acknowledgment is given. Editor: Sharon Primbsch, AA6XZ

Deadline for May issue: Tues., Apr. 26th

Articles may be submitted by e-mail to aa6xz@earthlink.net.

April 8th EBARC Meeting “Tower Takedown” by Sharon Primbsch, AA6XZ

Our speaker is Sharon Primbsch, AA6XZ. She will describe the recent successful effort (below) to dismantle her tower and antennas.

The general EBARC meeting will again be held as a virtual Zoom meeting only. The Zoom link will be sent via email and be posted on ebarc.org. We hope you join us! Because of the pandemic, future meetings for (TBD) more months will also be held via Zoom.



Field Day 2022 Planning Katie Carney, KN6APB

To plan and execute Field Day as a club, we need a committee of 5 or 6 people by our April 8th general meeting. Here's what we need:

Location: This is the first decision we need to make, and it must happen right away. Options are Cesar Chavez Park, cooperate with KARO-ECHO, Rosie the Riveter Park, or somewhere else.

Cooperation: This decision needs to be made early also. Should we operate KARO-ECHO's GOTA station, as we did last year?

Stations / Equipment: Do we have enough equipment in working order? Do we have logging software and power? We need people to take “ownership” of this issue. We also need setup and takedown volunteers, and folks to staff the stations we'll have.

Timing: Field Day is a “2-day” event, starting 1800 UTC Saturday, June 25, and ending 2059 UTC Sunday, June 26. Will we operate the whole time or have a shorter Field Day?

To be on the Field Day Committee, please send email to me ASAP; programs@ebarc.org. I look forward to hearing from you!

Meeting Place Update

At the March Executive Committee meeting, there was a vote to exclude Gyuto Foundation and Juku from possible general meeting places. This is largely because of cost. Two venues still under consideration are Kensington Community Center and Central Stage, which also may be too expensive. The three other venues being investigated are; Contra Costa College, Unitarian Universalist Church, and Open Door Methodist Church.

My HamPi 2 Experience

Todd Teachout, W8BIK

Having a Raspberry Pi Model 3 and desiring to operate in digital modes, I was curious about what HamPi 3 is and does. The way to find out is to install it then “play” with the various applications in it.

Installing HamPi is moderately challenging. Here are my step by step efforts at getting HamPi and installing it on an Micro SD card, which gets inserted into the Raspberry Pi.

I downloaded HamPi_v2.0b1_64bit.img.xz from *Sourceforge*. I saved it to my MacBook Pro (from 2011) downloads folder. That took about an hour with my DSL line.

I discovered this file was too big to fit onto the SD card I already had setup for my RSPi. So I got a new Micro SD card for \$15.

I formatted the Micro SD card using *SD formatter* from the SD association. I formatted it on a 2018 HP envy PC laptop that I also have. I could have done it on my MacBook Pro, but I did it on the PC Laptop.

I ejected the Micro SD card from the SD card slot on the HP laptop.

I inserted the Micro SC card into the SD card slot on the MacBook Pro. The MacBook showed the formatted card (I named the volume HamPi).

I went to the *Balena* website (see General Meeting minutes for the link) to get the *Etcher* software. I downloaded it to my MacBook Pro. The download took about 2 minutes. Installed *Balena Etcher* on my MacBook Pro.

I ran *Balena Etcher* from the MacBook Pro. There are 3 steps. 1) It asks you what file to use (use the HamPi_v2.0b1... file) 2) it asks which “disk” to select. *Balena* did not

recognize the HamPi volume name on the Micro SD card. For me, I made the choice by reported size of the disk. My Micro SD card is about 32GB is size. My other drive is 500 GB. I selected the 32GB “disk.” 3) There is a button to activate *Flash*. At that point *Balena Etcher* flashes the file image onto the Micro SD card. It installs it, then verifies the install. This is about a 15 minute process. In hindsight, I probably didn’t need to format the SD card, but I’m not sure about that.

After flashing was completed, my MacBook no longer recognized the SD card in the slot. So I just physically removed it without any ejecting command.

I removed the Micro SD card from its SD card adapter, plugged the card into the Raspberry Pi Micro SD card slot. I also connected a monitor, a keyboard, a power cord, and a wireless mouse (into one of the USB ports). I then fired up the Raspberry Pi Model 3.

HamPi showed up on the monitor. There were some minor setup issues; country, language, keyboard type, time zone, network to connect to. Then it is ready to connect to various radios and sound cards.

My RSPi had been previously setup using Rasperian Operating System. That setup is a little more general. There was not enough free space on the Micro SD card “disk” to install HamPi. The HamPi system installs a pretty basic version of Debian Linux OS and provides some non-ham applications. I will need to explore the OS further, later.

The whole process, from opening the new Micro SD card to seeing the system function, took about an hour. Getting the file (about 1.5GB file) from the *Sourceforge* location took a little while, between an hour and two hours. I did it previously, before putting it on the Micro SD card and install it on the Raspberry Pi Model 3.

The presentation assumed that HamPi would

be installed on a Raspberry Pi 4, a faster computer. Using that the install could possibly get it done in 45 minutes.

Later on I explored what is in HamPi.

HamPi seems to have removed several applications from Rasperian version of Linux that makes it close to a PC or Mac in usefulness. If one wants to use the Pi just for radio, maybe that is ok.

On the Pi 3 Model B that I'm using, after I flashed the image, I went to the file manager. I saw that I only had access to about 16GB of my 32GB flash drive. The HamPi presenter, Dave Slotter, identified this issue in his slide presentation. He gave instructions to make necessary changes. I've done that, and now I have full access to my 32GB flash drive.

With this install effort done, next steps are to explore the software in HamPi and/or make electrical connections between one's radio, radio sound card and the Raspberry Pi. I have not done that yet.

The Raspberry Pi has several USB ports. Most hardwire connections to radios can be made through those. The Raspberry Pi also has a general purpose input/output connector containing 40 pins. This series of pins enables hardware interacting with the Raspberry Pi. The Pi organization has optional adapters that use this bank of pins to give the Pi vision and other functions. It looks like someone has designed an adapter where you can connect a coax line to allow more communication between the Pi and the radio. Once that is done and verified, you can continue and figure out how get FLDigi and WSJT-X to work on the Raspberry Pi.

All in all, HamPi and Raspberry Pi are a good combination for members who like to tinker with hardware, software, and digital modes.

March 2022 General Minutes Todd Teachout, W8BIK, Secretary

The EBARC General Meeting was held March 11, 2022, virtually via the Zoom internet conferencing application, as a result of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. 22 people attended. The President called the meeting to order.

A Zoom meeting invite was distributed via e-mail on 3/10/2022. An agenda was sent out in an e-mail on 3/10/2022.

President Chris welcomed attendees. The agenda was adjusted to allow the presentation to start, first. The presenter, Dave Slotter, is based in Georgia, in the Eastern time zone, three hours ahead of the Pacific time zone.

Program

Dave Slotter, W3DJS, is the creator of HamPi. HamPi is a software package that assembles the Linux operating system and several other programs to make the Raspberry Pi computer an inexpensive, small, and useful tool. HamPi includes several programs for using the internet, for gaming, and for programming. However, the heart of the software distribution includes approximately 100 ham radio applications. The most notable applications are FLDIGI and WSJT-X for digital mode operation. There are logging apps; apps that facilitate APRS (e.g. tracking of balloons carrying radios); apps to allow tracking on the Reverse Beacon Network; CW/Morse Code apps; apps supporting software defined radio. There are DSTAR apps, satellite apps, WinLink, and EmComm apps. There are other apps related to antenna modeling; to assist studying for amateur and commercial radio operating licenses; to assist in radio repeater programming; for slow scan TV; and many others.

Dave discussed the Raspberry Pi computer, which was developed to provide an inexpensive computer for anyone interested in

learning about computer hardware and computer programming (more info at <https://www.raspberrypi.com>). Dave encouraged people considering using HamPi to assess their needs and get the appropriate Raspberry Pi. There are several models available that will run HamPi. The latest version of HamPi, version 2, has been successfully installed and run on the Raspberry Pi 4 Model B. His presentation gave an overview of getting the Pi, possible accessories (power, display, keyboard), and ways to connect the Raspberry Pi to a radio.

While Dave developed HamPi, he also developed a companion system called HamPC that is similar to HamPi, but works on PCs and laptops configured to use the Linux operating system (which is not as actively used).

HamPi can be downloaded for free from <http://hampi.sourceforge.net>. The support forum is at <https://groups.io/g/Ham-Pi>

HamPC is available at <http://hampc.sourceforge.net>. Its support forum is at <https://groups.io/g/HamPC>

To run HamPi you need a Raspberry Pi computer (along with a keyboard, power supply, and display) and a Micro SD card to store the software. The suggested process to install HamPi is to download a disk image file from sourceforge onto a PC or a Mac. Then also download and install onto your PC or Mac a program called Balena Etcher. Then run Etcher. Etcher will prompt you to select the disk image file, then prompt you to select the appropriate disk (a Micro SD card) where HamPi will go. It then provides a final prompt, a button, to activate the process to unpack file and then flash the code onto the selected Micro SD card. Etcher is available from <https://www.balena.io/etcher/>

Dave demands no payment to use HamPi, but encourages those pleased with the product to make donations to two organizations that advocate 50-50 parenting in families split up

due to divorce. HamPi also has a prompt where Dave request a QSL card from the user who successfully installs and intends to use HamPi.

Officer Reports:

Secretary: Todd Teachout reported that the draft February 2022 EBARC general meeting minutes were published in the March 2022 *Blown Fuse* newsletter. He reported receiving no correction requests. He recommended the attendees approved the minutes. Katie Carney motioned that the group approve the February minutes. Sharon Primbsch seconded the motion. Minutes were approved by affirmation.

Treasurer: Audrey Nieman reported that her report is in the March *Blown Fuse*. To recap, the January beginning balance was \$12,080.21. The club had \$160.00 in revenue from membership renewals. The club earned \$0.04 interest on deposits. The club had expenses of \$103.00 for storage space rental. The ending balance is \$12,137.25 (of which \$5,000 is held in a Certificate of Deposit and \$40 is petty cash). The club set up the ability to accept electronic payments through PayPal. Funds should be sent to treasurer@ebarc.org. People sending funds are encouraged to edit the note area in PayPal to identify the sender and what the payment is for. More information about the process is expected to be discussed in the *Blown Fuse*. Howdy suggested the website be updated to add a link or a button to PayPal for visitors who want to join EBARC.

2nd VP-Membership/Newsletter/VE Testing: Sharon Primbsch reported the deadline for articles for the April 2022 *Blown Fuse* newsletter is noted in the newsletter (March 22nd). As of today EBARC has 54 members. Due to pandemic restrictions, the April VE radio operator licensing test session will not occur. A pandemic-safe venue has not been located for doing inside sit-down tests. Three VE's may be stepping down.

1st VP Programs: 1st VP Katie Carney thanked Dave for giving tonight's presentation about HamPi. Next month Sharon Primbsch is expected to give a presentation about her home radio tower and antennas.

Katie brought up the topic of Field Day 2022 planning. Field Day has been the club's big event. The contest encourages people to operate away from their normal home shack using portable set ups that use low power. Katie is looking for a member volunteer to lead the effort. Katie and other members will add support. She reminded attendees that Field Day 2021 was a collaborative exercise with the KARO-ECHO Club. The daytime operating event happened at Canyon Trail Park in El Cerrito. Katie/Chris setup and operated the SSB table and welcomed others to operate. The Fenton's ran an EmComm demonstration table; Howdy Goudey ran a digital communications table; and Don Simon and others ran a CW/Morse code table. At the moment it is unclear what other nearby Clubs are intending to do for Field Day 2022. **People interested in helping out or otherwise participating contact Katie (programs@ebarc.org).** Robin Spalding reminded members that the rules for 2022 will be similar to 2021. This would allow members to operate as individuals from home and take credit for contacting the club station, W6CUS. These operators could then go to the Field Day operating site and help work W6CUS, too.

President: Chris Harwood also thanked Dave Slotter for his presentation. Chris announced he will have another radio operation party at his home on April 10. This will coincide with the ARRL Rookie Roundup Contest. The April 10th event will feature single sideband operation. The contest runs from 1800 to 2359 UTC (11:00 a.m. to 5:59 p.m. PDT).

Chris discussed the e-mail forwarded through Jan Kuhl and Sharon Primbsch from Kelly Tuttle, WB6AAJ, in San Jose regarding a solicitation for radios to help Ukraine in their defense from Russian military invasion. Some

were confused by the request, as Ukraine banned amateur radio operations on February 24th. The e-mail requested donation of two Yaesu FT-897 transceivers to monitor Russian aircraft and ten to twenty Baofeng 888S handi-talkies for unspecified use. Attendees were concerned that a response may not result the equipment getting to the people who are requesting it or need it. People were also concerned that the solicitation could be a scam. Nonetheless, Ukraine is in need of help in many ways. The e-mail suggested that the source of the request is a non-government agency based in Poland or the Polish Government. The radios may be for users just outside of Ukraine to assist the Ukrainians resisting the invasion. Poland and other countries neighboring Ukraine are also challenged in efforts to accommodate and support Ukrainian refugees. As a club, no action was taken. If you have more questions or want to make a personal donation, the person to contact is Larry Rau, W6WUH, located on Coleman Valley Road in Occidental, blimpboy@sonic.net

Guest Karl Hartman introduced himself. He has been interested in radio operations in many ways. He mentioned that he had worked at an antenna site used by the SETI (Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence) project. He lives in Walnut Creek

Guest Aaron Kurth, KN6SMS, is a new ham licensee. He came into contact with EBARC members while operating his GMRS handi-talkie and interacting with nearby repeaters. He works as a French chef. Jay Fenton complimented Aaron, as his radios put out a very good signal from his location.

Attendees welcomed Karl and Aaron.

Old Business In-Person Meeting Place: not discussed

New Business- Field Day 2022, See 1st VP Programs officer report.

Announcements-

1. the QSO Today Conference is happening this weekend 3/11 to 3/13. Dave Slotter is giving another presentation there about HamPi.
2. Rookie Roundup-SSB Mode. See President's report.

Chris thanked attendees for coming to tonight's meeting.

Sharon motioned the meeting adjourn.
Chris seconded the motion. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m. Next meeting is April 8, 2022.

Doublecheck Rookie Roundup!

Before you show up at Chris Harwood's for the Rookie Roundup event April 10th, verify it!
Chris can be reached via president@ebarc.org.

Yet More Righting Rules for Editors

*The spell checker is not always write.
Absolutely always avoid annoying alliteration.
Be more or less specific.*

Treasurer's Report February 2022 Audrey Nieman, W6BBQ, Treas.

FEBRUARY GENERAL FUND¹

Beginning Balance \$12,137.25

Income:

Earned Interest \$0.03

2022 Dues..... 120.00

Total General Income: \$120.03

Disbursements:

Storage Locker 103.00

Post Office Box Rental 216.00

Total General Disbursements..... \$319.00

Ending Balance \$11,938.28

(portion as petty cash..... \$40.00)

(portion as a US Bank CD... \$5,000.00)

¹\$100 earmarked for youth scholarships

You can now send electronic payments to EBARC via PayPal. Funds should be sent to treasurer@ebarc.org. Edit the note area in PayPal to identify yourself (including callsign) and what the payment is for.

Many thanks to Michael McMillan, K6MCM, for preafrooding this month's *Blown Fuse*.

Future Bay Area Events

- Current Bay Area Public Service Events: See www.ebarc.org, click on "Current Events", then scroll to "Calendar of Bay Area Ham Radio Public Service Events."
- EBARC, ORCA, and ARCA sponsor joint ARRL VEC Amateur Radio test sessions quarterly at 9 a.m. in the Media Room, 1605 Martin Luther King Jr. Way (at 16th St.), Oakland. Because of COVID, the 2022 dates have not been set. The fee is \$15. Candidates must preregister at davidotey@comcast.net or call 510-741-8227.
- East Bay Section ARRL ARES; arrr.volunteerhub.com/lp/eb. CoCoCo ACS Training: Details from "DJ" djovida, KJ6DJ, kj6dj@arrr.net, (415) 215-6658, or via RACES net, 6:45 p.m., Thursdays on 145.11 MHz. Also see Sheriff Office's Communications Unit David Nielson, K6CDN, davidnielson@yahoo.com

The East Bay Amateur Radio Club, founded in 1947, is a California non-profit organization of amateur radio operators in Contra Costa and Alameda counties. The club is open to anyone interested in amateur radio. Annual dues are \$30 for individual membership, \$35 for a family membership, and \$10 for students K-12. For information, send email to ebham.office@gmail.com, contact any EBARC officer, see Web page www.ebarc.org, or write EBARC, P.O. Box 1393, El Cerrito, CA 94530. You can also follow us on Twitter using @w6cus, or on Facebook's "East Bay Amateur Radio Club."

2022 East Bay Amateur Radio Club Executive Committee

Chris Harwood, AA6AT, President president@ebarc.org
 Katie Carney, KN6APB, 1st VP / Program Chair 510-326-3886
 Sharon Primbsch, AA6XZ, 2nd VP / Membership Chair 510-741-8227
 Todd Teachout, W8BIK, Secretary 510-799-6051
 Audrey Nieman, W6BBQ, Treasurer / Finance Chair 510-682-7938

2022 EBARC's Other Committee Heads and Contacts

Steering Committee: Katie Carney, KN6APB 510-326-3886
 Social Media: Katie Carney, KN6APB 510-326-3886
Blown Fuse Editor: Sharon Primbsch, AA6XZ 510-741-8227
 W6CUS Trustee: Chris Harwood, AA6AT president@ebarc.org
 Webmaster: Chris Harwood, AA6AT president@ebarc.org

AMATEUR RADIO NETS

NET	DAYS	LOCAL TIME	FREQ, MHZ
"Over the Hill Gang" Breakfast/Commute Net	Mo-Fr	0710 (PL 82.5-)	145.110
Contra Costa Com. Club Digital Net (by arrangement)	Tue*	1900 (PL 82.5+)	444.275
Contra Costa Communications Club Net	Tue	1930 (PL 82.5-)	224.300
"QRM Net"	Tue	1930 (PL 82.5-)	224.300
UCB ARC (W6BB) EMMCOMM Net	1 st Wed	1200 (PL 131.8+)	440.900
UCB ARC (W6BB) EMMCOMM Net	1 st Wed	1200 (PL 107.2-)	145.490
UCB ARC (W6BB) EMMCOMM Net	1 st Wed	1200 simplex	145.430
UCB ARC (W6BB) Club Net	Wed	1900 (PL 103.5+)	442.275
West Contra Costa EMCOMM Net	Thu	1845 (PL 82.5-)	145.110
KARO/ECHO ARES EMCOMM Net	Thu	~1900 simplex	146.415
NALCO ARES EMCOMM Net	Thu	1915 (PL 131.8+)	440.900
Oakland ARES Emergency Communications Net	Thu	1930 (PL 77-)	146.880
Contra Costa Communications Club Net	Thu	1930 (PL 82.5-)	145.110
Bay Shores Richmond EMCOMM Net	Sat	0900 (PL 82.5-)	145.110
Bay Shores Richmond EMCOMM Net	Sat	0915 (PL 82.5+)	444.275
Bay Shores Richmond EMCOMM Net	Sat	0930 (PL 82.5-)	224.300

ACS West CoCoCo: "DJ" djovida, KJ6DJ, kj6dj@arrl.net, (415) 215-6658.*
 Frequencies: #1=145.110, #2=147.570s.